

U.S. Election Assistance Commission

Help America Vote Act - Election Security Program

FY23 Program Narrative Guidelines

Purpose and Use of Funds. The purpose of the program narrative is to provide U.S. citizens, Congress, the EAC and other election stakeholders with information about how your state will use these funds to improve the administration of elections for Federal office, including to enhance election technology and make election security improvements, as authorized under sections 101, 103, and 104 of HAVA.

Consistent with the requirements of HAVA, states may use this funding to: replace voting equipment that only records a voter's intent electronically with equipment that utilizes a voter-verified paper record; implement a post-election audit system that provides a high-level of confidence in the accuracy of the final vote tally; upgrade election-related computer systems to address cyber vulnerabilities identified through [Department of Homeland Security] or similar scans or assessments of existing election systems; facilitate cybersecurity training for the state chief election official's office and local election officials; implement established cybersecurity best practices for election systems; and fund other activities that will improve the security of elections for Federal office.

Consistent with provisions in HAVA Section 101, states have discretion upon expenditures within general categories. The EAC can answer specific questions about how the money may be utilized and will be capturing questions from states and sharing the answers in updated versions of the FAQ document on the EAC website. The activities can be an expansion of activities the state has underway with its previous Election Security HAVA grant or different, allowable activities under Section 101 of HAVA.

EAC will publish the program narratives on its website. Information from annual state progress reports on implementing the activities described in the narrative will be consolidated and reported to Congress and the public by the EAC. EAC will use its clearinghouse, website, and other forms of communication to highlight how states and localities are planning to use the funds.

Program Narrative Instructions. The narrative should be one- to three-pages in length and describe how your state or territory (hereon 'state') plans to spend the FY23 HAVA Election Security grant funds and required matching funds. The narrative should include the amount of your award and matching commitment and the timeframe in which you plan to use the funds. The narrative should describe both immediate improvements/activities that are underway and longer-term activities leading up to the 2024 election and beyond.

If you plan to use the funds to expand activities you are funding with the existing funds in your Election Security HAVA grant, be specific about how and in what ways these funds will expand those activities. If you plan to use the funds for other allowable activities under Section 101 of HAVA not already supported under the existing grant, be clear about how the activities are different from activities funded under the existing grant.

To ensure consistent reporting across states and localities, use the below program categories when developing your narrative. Use only the categories that are part of your planned activities and add them to this list as needed.

1. Voting Equipment
2. Voting Processes
3. Voting Registration Systems
4. Election Auditing
5. Cyber and Physical Security
6. Voter Education
7. Accessibility
8. Other (Provide Description)

Uploading to GrantSolutions

Follow the separate instructions provided by the EAC on submitting your completed program narrative via GrantSolutions.

EAC Submission Review. EAC will review each submission and provide feedback and technical assistance that may require revisions to the submission. EAC will confirm that the program narratives are sufficiently detailed to allow both stakeholders and federal auditors to understand the plan for spending the funds and track progress to know if the funds were used in an effective manner. The proposed expenses must be reasonable, allocable, and allowable under HAVA and 2 CFR Part 200.

Budget Changes

EAC recognizes that plans and budgets may change over time. You will be able to request a budget amendment if needed. A budget amendment is required if a new category of funding is being added and/or a shift of more than 10% of the total federal award is being requested between categories. For ease of review, provide language in your narrative that clarifies budget variances of 10% or more.